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DE RUEHOS #0124 0461449  
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FM AMCONSUL LAGOS

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8529  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY 8358  
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 0156  
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ PRIORITY 0136  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 0139  
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO PRIORITY 0153  
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAHLC/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAAIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 000124

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, INR/AA, DS/IP/AF, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/OSAC  
WARSAW FOR LISA PIASCIK  
CIUDAD JUAREZ FOR DONNA BLAIR  
ISTANBUL FOR TASHAWNA SMITH  
SAO PAULO FOR ANDREW WITHERSPOON  
DOE FOR GPERSION, CGAY  
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS, SRENENDER, DFIELDS  
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS  
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR FLISER  
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD  
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART  
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT  
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER  
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/15/2017

TAGS: ASEC CASC EPET KDEM NI PGOV PREL

SUBJECT: SITREP 16: SSS OPENS NEW LINE OF COMMUNICATION

REF: LAGOS 116

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (C) Pivot-GIS employees American Bill Graham and Nigerian Ezekiel Akwa remain hostages. John Walker of Control Risks Group told the February 15 Pivot-GIS Hostage Crisis Group he met the Director of Rivers State Security Service (SSS), Alhaji Kola Adeshina, on February 14. Adeshina informed Walker that he opened another line of communication with a local Ijaw elder who was once involved in hostage-taking. The elder is respected by militant leader Prince Igodu, who is purportedly behind this kidnapping. Adeshina said this elder will meet Prince Igodu in hopes of persuading him to release the hostages quickly and only for the modest payment that will probably be termed a facilitator fee or cost. According to Walker, the elder assured SSS the hostages are fine; Walker passed SSS proof of life questions on February 14 to confirm this.

¶2. (C) Walker said Phillipa Graham is calm and has backed off her threat to approach the media--for now. On February 14, she confided to Walker that following her husband's abduction she had contacted Golden, a youth leader in the Minikpiti village where Pivot-GIS is located. Golden purportedly confirmed Prince Igodu had engineered the kidnapping. Golden said he could secure the hostages' release for naira 2 million (approximately USD 15,625). Mrs. Graham did not accept this offer. Walker told the Hostage

Crisis Group he heard Golden previously had a falling out with Bill Graham regarding a naira 2.5 million demand he presented Graham allegedly on behalf of the community. Graham refused to pay the sum.

¶3. (C) Comment: It appears the SSS has stepped up its efforts to secure Graham's release. Using the local elder as an alternate line of communication is an example of this effort. It will take a few days to determine if this new avenue will bear fruit. End Comment.

BROWNE